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**Field Services Alliance-2004 Annual Meeting
St. Louis, Missouri
September 29, 2004**

Minutes

Submitted by Melissa Davis, Secretary

Attending:

Chuck Backus, Kentucky Historical Society
J.D. Britton, Ohio Historical Society
Melissa Davis, Humanities Tennessee
David Grabitske, Minnesota Historical Society
Katherine Dill, Indiana Historical Society
Timothy Glines, Minnesota Historical Society
John Harris, Indiana Historical Society
Carol Harsh, Smithsonian, Museums on Mains Street
Janice Klein, Small Museum Administration Committee, AAM
Jeff Larrabee, Army National Guard Historical Services
Melinda Markell, Upper Midwest Conservation Services
Tom McKay, Wisconsin Historical Society
Pat Miller, Illinois Heritage Association
Karla Nicholson, AASLH
Elisa Redman, Upper Midwest Conservation Services
Connie Rendfeld, Indiana Historical Society
Jo Ann Williford, North Carolina Office of Archives & History/Fed. Of N.C. Historical Societies
Amy Wilson, Upstate History Alliance/Chemung County Historical Society
Laura Word, NEH
Robbie Davis, Smithsonian Inst. Traveling Exhibitions Service?

Welcome and Introductions

Rendfeld called the meeting to order, welcomed all, and asked members to introduce themselves and talk about new initiatives at their institutions since the Nashville retreat last February. Each agency present reported. Attendees reviewed the minutes from the 2004 retreat and a minor correction was made. McKay moved to approve the minutes. Glines

seconded. The minutes were approved.

News from AASLH

Nicholson reported AASLH updates and information. She presented findings from the PDQ surveys to AASLH workshop attendees. The findings revealed a desire for intermediate level workshops that include topics such as making a case for the value of local history and collaborations. AASLH will be partnering locally for workshops in '05; tacking on an optional board development component to workshops, and partnering with the Trust for extended topics of Historic Homes.

AASLH has tested its online archives course, which will be available to membership in January 2005, is under \$100 and covers topics from collecting to storage. Nicholson presented information about the History Channel Grant Program, a Learning in Museums partnership with Virginia, the Small Museum Coalition Task Force, and a plan of Alta Mira press to publish a series of eight "basics" books.

Coalition for Small Museums and SMAC-AAM

Klein thanked Nicholson for her creation of the small museum listserv. She presented information about AAM's Small Museum Day, affiliates luncheon, and scholarship program in conjunction with the annual conference. She also presented information about the Small Museum Coalition's small museum clearinghouse, which acts as an umbrella group for sharing information among small museums and recommending partnerships between small museums when the opportunities arise. Finally, Klein reported that an AAM intern compiled a calendar of professional development activity occurring annually, but that it was still in process, as is the method by which to keep it up to date.

Status of Committees

Rendfeld led a discussion of committee goals and updated task lists.

Goal I: To maintain and further develop a forum to share information and promote collegiality among the field services professional and other interested colleagues.

Goal I tasks are pursuant to the mini-census, which Rendfeld reported was underway.

Goal II: To strengthen the field services/AASLH collaboration

McKay will be submitting a field services piece to an upcoming issue of AASLH's *Dispatch*. Attendees discussed FSA involvement at the AASLH 2005 conference in Pittsburg. Suggestions included hosting a day-long workshop of themed sessions centering on topics such as controversial exhibit topics, historic houses and the interpretation of "lore," and collecting contemporary history. Another suggestion was to provide basics, such as fundraising and governance. The committee will pursue the matter.

Goal III: To develop a theory and methodology of practice for field services work.

Grabitske presented the committee's FSA and FS documents. After a two-week review period, the documents stand adopted.

Goal IV: To develop access to materials, workshops, programs, and other resources which help field service professionals do their work.

Harsh reported on a committee meeting addressing how to streamline and share training and resources across state lines. The committee discussed developing workshops and corresponding materials to provide museum basics at a state, rather than national, level. Four MoMS states are interested in participating: TN, MO, KS, and MI. This also involves building a list of speakers/presenters, and a "training the trainers" possibility. The committee will pursue the matter.

Harris reported that the FSA web site has some additional links and technical materials. Minutes and other documents are forthcoming. Membership is continually updated.

Training Session: Good Workshop Exercises

McKay led a workshop about developing exhibit topics. Grabitske led a workshop about choosing an interpretive perspective. Harris shared materials and information about a workshop for developing board members.

Rendfeld adjourned the meeting.